

our researches did not exactly collide, in which case it would no doubt be difficult to obtain the support for both parties of botanical institutions.

I need hardly repeat to you, how much obliged I feel to you for having tried to find a collector in the U. S. But after considering all things I have concluded that the best thing will be to go myself and take my native assistants, which now are quite trained to the work already and which are accustomed to the climate and manners, a thing not unimportant, where yellow fever is particularly dangerous for northern people.

I have received from Europe and New York the necessary material as quantities of pressing paper, presses, etc and the specimens to be sent and will no doubt be acceptable, they being taken of larger size and in the best condition possible, in which respect my herbarium shows a great progress compared to the specimens I once sent you from here.

I shall be very glad to send the plants required for the U. S. to the Curator of your Herb., who also might receive subscriptions for plants, wood and seed. Of these latter I have already sent a number to European institutions. I forgot the address of Mr. Martindale, whom I understood to wish dried plants.

I hope, my dear Sir, you will still one of these days be able to come out to these islands, why f. i. not say the way back from Europe over St. Thomas, and via Havana to New York? I shall not fail to avail myself of your kind permission to continue our correspondence after your going abroad and to give you information about my further progress here, and with best wishes for a safe passage for yourself and Mrs. Gray

I remain

Yours very truly
Eggers

St. Thomas, 19th Aug. 1850

My dear Professor Gray!

I am very much obliged indeed for your kind letter of 1st inst. and the copy of Am. Journ. Sc., which your civility has forwarded to me.

I think that especially considering the lesser distance there can be no difficulty in offering the W. I. plants to American subscribers for \$50. a hundred and I shall therefore be glad to receive as many of them at this price as possible. Having set to work already for several months, I can now at once forward the first hundred of plants from these islands, as in fact I am doing already to my agent in Europe, where I am glad to say I have found quite a number of subscribers already, among others the Bot. Museum at Kew, the Bot. Garden at St. Petersburg, as well as several prominent botanists in various countries.

I now propose to continue for some months the formation of herbaria on these islands and then shortly after New year to start for Dominica and Trinidad and after that for Polovico. My collections from Dominica, made during February this year, are exceedingly interesting, and contain quite a number of species, not mentioned in Griseb's Flora, especially some remarkable *Colobaceae* and *Jessneriaceae* as well as some *Bromeliaceae*. I have at present two native collectors, of which the one particularly is very clever and even has learned most of the botanical names already. I believe I wrote to you some time ago

about a new hemispermaceous plant, an erect tree, which from insufficient material was described in *Sc. Prodr.* I, 102, after Poiret as a *Cesampelos*? *Cuneifolia*. I have now also been fortunate enough to obtain the female tree and seed, so that I have been enabled to describe the species as *Cocculus erecta*, or perhaps more correctly *Pachygone*. I shall shortly send you dried specimens of the female tree and seed.

I should of course be very glad to secure the services of an experienced collector as Mr. Curtis for my undertaking. But I am afraid he will consider the matter a business of the same kind as his collecting in Florida, that is to say, getting up of a number of sets of plants for distributions among subscribers. This of course is also part of my plan, in order to cover expenses in exploring the islands, but only a part, as another part, and the one, I consider at least as important, is to make phytogeographical studies about the character of the vegetation, the distribution of species, the atmospheric moisture, temperature etc, which all are observations, without which the exploration of the islands will hardly be more than a mere increase of plant species. I must therefore consider it necessary to go myself to the various islands and to make these investigations, and to compare them together for the various islands, having at the same time one or more collectors with me to do the more mechanical part of the work, that is, after finding the species to have been collected and prepared for conservation and distribution.

It therefore appears necessary to see that I must have the direction myself of the exploration and subsequent application of the material collected, both with regard to where the collections are to be made as also to what extent, and how the funds obtained through these collections are to be applied. I hardly think Mr. Curtis, having been collecting already on his own account, will be desirous of subordinating himself to me in these respects. But you will no doubt understand, my dear Professor, that it can afford me little satisfaction or not contribute much to my knowledge of the W. I. islands, that a man comes out to Portorico or Hayti in order to collect plants, like Dr. Garber, who spent several months in Portorico and finally brought home a little collection, which may or may not give some new contribution to the list of species in that island, but which otherwise hardly gives us more light upon those questions, that are of importance particularly as regard Portorico and the Virgin islands. At all events a man in the position as Dr. Garber can hardly be said to assist me in the work I have now undertaken with regard to exploring these islands and to which through my prospectus I have now invited subscribers.

This will of course not preclude Mr. Curtis, if he wishes, to collect in the W. I. also, and there is a field so large, that there certainly is room for several workers. I only should wish that